A. Ricardo López  
Associate Professor of History  
Proposal Summer Research Grant (2014)  

Main Task  
I am applying for a summer research grant to finish an edited volume on the Colombian history titled *Between the Seas: Colombia in The Twentieth Century*. I have an advanced draft of the manuscript but I need to write an introduction and edit some of the chapters after a final meeting with the contributors to the volume in early January 2014 in the annual American Historical Association conference in Washington D.C. I am planning to submit the manuscript for review by late August 2014. A summer research grant would put me in a really good position to achieve this goal. Lexington Books, an academic division of Rowman and Littlefield publishers with an interest in teaching-oriented books, has shown a strong interest in the manuscript and has agreed to send it out for review.

Brief Description of the Manuscript  
The book has its roots in a panel I organized at the University of Virginia in 2009 titled *Rethinking the National Front in Colombia*. Since then, I, along with Robert Karl from Princeton University, have been working with several scholars to put together a volume that expands some of the research questions and themes presented in that panel. The book brings together Colombian and U.S. historians working on politics, state formation, and national identities during the twentieth century. The volume challenges a strong tendency among historians to tell Colombian history only through a foundational narrative of perpetual violence. In stark contrast, the book focuses on how different social sectors experienced economic developments, international relations, cultural programs, state, and political violence in their effort to redefine what it meant to be part of a Colombian nation. Violence is, in this approach, not the foundational origin of a historical explanation of Colombia during the twentieth century but rather that which one wants to explain.

Importance of the Project  
Taking this critical approach the book then rethinks the histories of Colombia as a nation. If we were to summarize what has informed this naturalized narrative of violence as a capital sin in Colombia history, it would be fair to say that scholars have offered two interrelated explanations. First, scholars have historicized the Colombian state since late nineteenth century as “weak” precisely because, following what Weber predicted for “modern societies,” these scholars argue such state has not been able to monopolize the “legitimate” form of violence to control social and political unrest. At the same time, other scholars have theorized the state as a “failure” because, following Gramsci’s understanding of hegemonic rule, such state has not productively secured popular consent. As a result, during the twentieth century, most historians argue, coercion and repression have characterized Colombian society making violence the foundational origin to understand what is usually defined as the lack or incompleteness of democratic rule in the nation. Taken together, the chapters featured in the volume seek to question these dominant narratives. First, the volume seeks to “internationalize” Colombian history by looking at the different social and economic programs supported by United States’ developmental offices and international organizations throughout the twentieth century—from peace initiatives to agrarian reforms to housing developments to educational
programs to religious-oriented missions to “cultural” programs. The book demonstrates how the Colombian state, in intimate relationship with private capital, promoted and consolidated an unprecedented set of social, economic, and cultural programs. In so doing, the state, rather than resorting on violence alone, as most if not scholars continue to argue, promoted these programs through which it attempted to secure popular consent for what was seen as a “democratic rule.” Second, the volume also questions the foundational narrative of violence by historicizing the political, economic, and cultural relationships created as a result of these unprecedented set of economic and social programs. The book historicizes different political attempts to secure popular consent in a variety of historical moments by offering a careful study of the relationship between different social groups—elites, middle classes, indigenous groups, working classes, and people of African descent—and the making of local, regional, and national states since the late nineteenth century. In the process, the volume as a whole offers a more historicized analysis where struggles, negotiations, accomodations, fragile but important pacts of domination, inclusionary and exclusionary practices of what it meant to be Colombia, and, of course, certain politics violence were part and parcel of a specific attempt to consolidate a democratic rule.

By developing this scholarship, I will contribute to two of the Western’s core values as listed in its Mission and Strategic Plan: “leading edge intellectual inquiry” and “bringing the world to Washington and Washington to the World.” Materializing this edited volume is the most significant way in which I can continue to build my credentials as a historian here both in the United States and Colombia. The volume will contribute to a growing literature on Cold War politics and to major reinterpretations of Colombian history. I have applied for a sabbatical leave for academic year 2014-2015 to pursue field research for an entirely different book project tentatively titled *Neo* Liberal Subjects: A Transnational History of Colombian Society 1958-1991. If awarded, I would begin my sabbatical mid-September 2014. This research grant would allow me to finish this manuscript during the summer so I can send it to press for review by late August before I embark on my new research endeavor.

**Projected Result:**

This summer grant will result in the publication of my second edited volume titled *Between the Seas: Colombia in The Twentieth Century*
Between the Seas: Colombia in the Twentieth Century

Table of Contents

Introduction: Democracy, Politics of Violence, and State Formation
A. Ricardo López, Western Washington University

Chapter 1
The Urban Reform of Radical Liberalism: Disentailment of Church Property in Bogota, 1861-187
Constanza Castro, Columbia University

Chapter 2
Configuring a Middle Ground: Arhuacos, Missionaries, Colonos, and Public Officials in the Sierra
Nevada, 1900-1920
Catalina Muñoz, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia

Chapter 3
Radio (Re)Public: Culture and Politics in Colombia, 1930-1960
Mary Roldán, Hunter College

Chapter 4
The Many Returns of José Dolores: State and Rural Society in the Making of Colombia’s Creole Peace,
1957-1966
Robert Karl, Princeton University

Chapter 5
Our life: State Surveillance, Politics, and Conflict in the 1960s
Óscar Calvo Isaza, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia

Chapter 6
Land Reform and the Pursuit of Productivity
Amy C. Offner, University of Pennsylvania

Chapter 7
From Middle Class to Petty Bourgeoisie: Political Radicalization and the Making of the Middle Class in
Bogotá, Colombia, 1963-1982
A. Ricardo López, Western Washington University

Chapter 8
Social Movements, State Formation—the Experiences of Indigenous Groups in Cauca during the second
half of the 20th century
Mauricio Archila-Neira, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Chapter 9
The Mafia Wars: U.S.-Colombia Narcotics Relations and the New Cold War, 1970s
Lina Britto, Harvard University

Chapter 10
Land Rights, Ethnic Identities, and State Making in Colombia’s Choco
Marta Domínguez, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia

Afterword
Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, University of Pennsylvania and Marco Palacios, Colegio de México